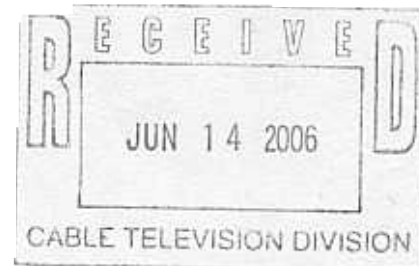


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TOWN OF SHREWSBURY
MASSACHUSETTS 01545-5398



June 12, 2006

Andrea Nixon
Clerk, Cable Television Division
Department of Telecommunications & Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02111

Dear Ms. Nixon:

The Town of Shrewsbury is opposed to Verizon's March 16, 2006, rulemaking petition filed with the Department of Telecommunications & Energy on the issue of CATV franchising process.

The proposed rulemaking is unnecessary because existing regulations meets the needs of both the Cities and Towns and the CATV operators. The only beneficiary of a regulation change that reduces the time to respond to a franchise request is the petitioner, Verizon.

At a time when many communities are faced with rising costs and slowed revenue growth it is critical that Towns reassess the market value of the use of public rights of ways to private profit making entities. The current franchise process allows worthwhile discourse amongst all stakeholders to craft a mutually beneficial agreement. Shortcutting this public franchising process has no benefit to the communities and its citizens.


The DTE must look at the Verizon proposed petition for what it is — purely a business decision designed to improve their profitability at the expense of due process or a franchising authority.

What is particularly disturbing is Verizon's attempt to cloak their request as "pro competition" when it is merely a sham and a deceitful argument to rid themselves of a proven franchise process used by incumbent CATV operators and Towns

I trust the DTE will see the petition for what it is and retain existing regulations that have allowed for competitive franchises by RCN, some municipal overbuilders and Verizon themselves.

I believe that it is also worth noting that while Verizon seeks to expedite the franchising process, this same company has prevented the Town from removing "double poles" in over one hundred locations throughout Town because they have not moved their wires while all other utilities have. In some cases, Verizon has not moved off the poles for more than twenty years! In our opinion, this is not only a public safety issue but an obvious double standard. Verizon has repeatedly ignored the Town's request to move their equipment off old poles but yet they seek an expeditious franchise process. It is wrong.

• Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any further questions or desire further comment, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

John I. Lebeaux
Chairman
Board of Selectmen

/jmc

cc: Senator Augustus
Representative Polito

